

October 2001

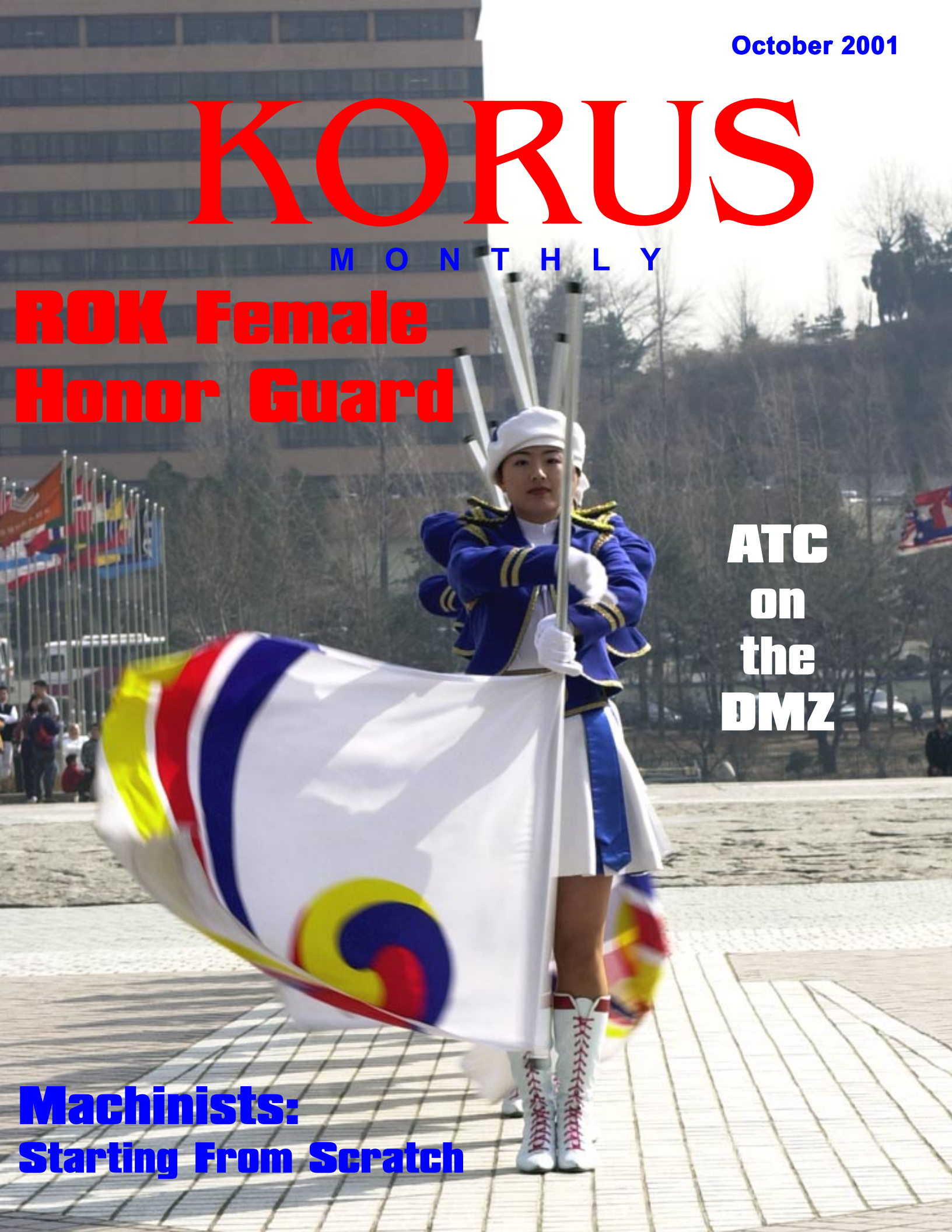
KORUS

M O N T H L Y

**ROK Female
Honor Guard**

**ATC
on
the
DMZ**

**Machinists:
Starting From Scratch**



KORUS

The Only Peninsula-Wide Web-based Publication for USFK Members

October 2001, Volume 30, Number 9	KORUS STAFF
U.S. Forces Korea Public Affairs Officer Col. Samuel T. Taylor III	Editor Air Force Staff Sgt. Martin Jackson
Eighth U.S. Army Public Affairs Officer Lt. Col. Benjamin B. Santos	Web Productions Manager Army Sgt. John R. Rozean
Command Information NCOIC Sgt. 1st Class Eric S. Hortin	Staff Writers Army Spc. Tommy Graham KATUSA Pfc. Kim, Nam Kwan

Cover

Staff. Sgt. Oh, Hyun Ju, ROK female NCO Honor Guard team member, initiates a color skills movement at a ceremony.

Photo by Pfc. Kim, Nam Kwan
Page 8



KORUS TRANSITION EXPLAINED

KORUS: 20-year history is full of changes

by Sgt. 1st Class Eric Hortin
Command Information NCOIC

The only constant in the universe is change. That's really the only worn-out cliché I could come up with to describe what is going on with KORUS magazine.

For more than 20 years, KORUS magazine was a magazine anyone on the Korean peninsula could pick up at the post exchanges, dental clinics, waiting rooms and distribution boxes. At first, it was a civilian publication with supporting articles from the various Public Affairs offices in Seoul. A change took place, as it became a commercial enterprise publication produced by the U.S. Forces Korea Public Affairs Office, with articles compiled from around the peninsula. It was also the first all-color magazine in the military.

All this is changing again before our very eyes, and I have the responsibility and the honor of taking KORUS to its new form. It will become the vanguard for future publications. KORUS will become the first command information publication based solely on the Web.

Many out there are wondering, "What will we read when we're waiting the 25 minutes before my dental appointment?" and "How will we find out what's going on in Korea?" I'm sure the other publications out there, such as the Southern Star and Seoul Word, will be available to meet the needs of those requiring a dose of news.

Those of you asking why this is taking place should know the whole story.

As a commercial enterprise publication, the government paid nothing for the printing and distribution of KORUS. All costs associated with printing and distribution were the responsibility of the printer. The advertising the printer sells is what pays for the publication. Those are the guidelines stipulated in the regulations that cover these types of publications. The last printer had printed the magazine for six years, and the contract expired Aug. 31. This year was a mandatory re-bid for the contract, again, per regulation.

The guy before my arrival didn't like to wait until the last minute to do things. So back in April, he started the paperwork for a new contract. Some changes were made to the old contract to assist the printer with the distribution. This is where the fun started.

The updated contract made its way over to one office, then another, and was bounced from section to section because no one had any

idea what to do with it. (This was before I settled into the position.) It was mid-June (that's when I come in) before it finally settled in an inbox and someone decided to take responsibility for it. There was still some confusion, though. If the government wasn't paying anything for the publication, why was paperwork being generated and who was going to actually "pay" for the publication? Several dozen phone calls, at least a dozen e-mails with lengthy attachments and lots of (my) gray hair later, a different someone finally got an idea of what we were trying to accomplish.

Some time in July, the contract went out for bid. I guess word got out that the previous printer had, for the last two years, complained that they were not making enough money from advertising to cover the cost of printing KORUS. (Why they didn't decide to stop printing a year ago, I'll never know.) No other authorized printers were willing to take the contract without some subsidizing. That is, unfortunately, in violation of those same regulations mentioned previously.

For 20-plus years, KORUS was a product our office put together, sent off to a printer, and viola, it showed up in our offices and others a few days later. Without a printer to accomplish this, it's not going to happen.

We debated funding it. But \$125,000 a year would wipe out our entire office budget. We considered several other options, but none were quite to anyone's liking. Going web-based seemed to be the best option – and it doesn't cost a thing. Only time is required to go out, take the pictures, write the articles and post it to a server so the editor can post it to a web page. It actually takes less time than printing. And chances are, KORUS will be updated more than on a monthly basis.

Understandably, this is not taking place without some growing pains. We realize with our limited technological backgrounds and current programs restricting our format, there will be a time period of adjustments and rewrites.

However, we in the Command Information section of the USFK/EUSA Public Affairs Office believe this publication will lead the way, and provide the public – locally and around the globe – access to the great stories of the service members, civilians and families here in Korea. With unlimited potential and an award-winning crew, KORUS will remain a quality publication, and more than it was before.

We at USFK/EUSA Public Affairs hope you enjoy this great on-line magazine.

The Command Huddle

USFK Sponsorship of DoDDS-K

by Gen. Thomas A. Schwartz

My theme for this month's CINC huddle is a new program we're launching—USFK Sponsorship of Department of Defense Dependent Schools-Korea (DoDDS-K) teachers and schools.

Think how much teachers and military members have in common, especially here in Korea. Both groups have traveled far to live in a foreign land.

Both military members and teachers dedicate themselves to a mission, and have a clear objective. The military mission is to be ready to fight tonight and win. The teachers' mission is to give our children the very best possible education and prepare them to be good, educated citizens.

Teaching is a great, daunting

challenge. President Reagan appreciated this, and quoted a passage from "A Man For All Seasons." Sir Thomas More, responding to a young friend's question of who would know if he was a good teacher, said;

"You, your pupils, your friends, God. Not a bad public, that."

Our USFK "public" knows and cares about our teachers. USFK is comprised of a team of teams: the branches of the military, DoD civilians, family members, and contractors. Each of these teams has members who have children in DoDDS-K schools, and many more of us have children some-

where else, so the education of children is important to us all.

For all these reasons, it only makes sense for USFK to take a more direct and active role supporting our children's education. To do this, we are now implementing a new program for unit sponsorship of DoDDS-K teachers and schools. It will be a Peninsula-wide partnership between units, students and teachers to strengthen ties between teachers and communities.

The program centers on "Adopt a School" where units agree to sponsor a school, be it elementary, middle school or high school. This "adoption" might include such things as tutoring and mentoring by soldiers, co-sponsoring an incoming

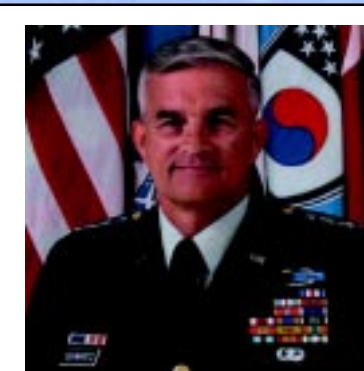
"With your help, our teachers will do an even better job of instructing our children in many things, including our own nation's history."

teacher, unit members taking part in school activities and units including students and teachers in unit activities.

Co-sponsoring new teachers is a critical piece, because many incoming DoDDS-K teachers and their families are new to Korea and also perhaps new to a military setting.

To help new DoDDS-K teachers and their families assimilate into the military community, units will assign a co-sponsor who will work along with the school's sponsor.

This will ensure that the new teacher feels welcome and quickly settles into our wonderful military



Gen. Thomas A. Schwartz

Commander in Chief: United Nations Command and ROK/U.S. Combined Forces Command
Commander: U.S. Forces Korea

family. We do this for incoming service members, so this just expands the program slightly to other "family" members.

With a new school year just begun, there is no better time to begin this program than right now. Also, getting started now allows time to plan events for American Education Week, Nov. 11-17.

All the great support you offer will contribute to our schools' and children's success and you will serve as role models to those children. With your help, our teachers will do an even better job of instructing our children in many things, including our own nation's history.

They will agree with of one of the Founding Fathers, John Jay, who said, "I consider knowledge to be the soul of a republic..."

The children gain that critical knowledge here, in Korea, where you are defending both our own and our host Republic's freedom. It is entirely fitting that those of you who defend these Republics also take a more active role in enhancing the knowledge within them.

I hope you will support this worthy program.

And Always Remember! I'm proud of what you do for us every day.

We go together.
Katchi Kapsida.

Making something from nothing

by Sgt. John Rozean
EUSA Public Affairs

Not unlike each and every military member stationed here in United States Forces Korea, machinists are asked to make things happen everyday. But sometimes they are just . . . making things.

Throughout the military services here in Korea, machinists and welders are assigned to different units and are working in unique shops and situations. While they may be a different drop of paint on the big picture, their missions are similar. Every day they are asked by their chain of command to create things when the military supply system is too slow, the part is too old or just no longer available by the original manufacturer.

“We are their last resort, so to speak,” said Master Sgt. John Kawalc, the aircraft metals technology shop chief, 51st Maintenance Squadron out at Osan Air Base. “Without us there would be a lot of airplanes parked, waiting for parts.”

In Kawlac’s shop, airmen are taking up the slack in the military supply system by going back to the basics. If someone needs a tool or a part and can’t get it; they make it themselves using their brains,



Left: Pvt. Andrew Tinsley, a machinist with 702nd MSB, 2nd Inf. Div., smooths out the rough edges of a bolt. Right: Tinsley under the direction of his supervisor, Sgt. Darrin Marker makes a part on a lathe.

their military training and a few pieces of scrap metal.

“If you think about it, everything metal is made in a machine shop somewhere,” said Tech Sgt. Geraldo Dieppa, also of Osan’s 51st Maint. Sqdn.

“Just about whatever people could want or need, a machinist can make it,” said Sgt. Darrin Marker, a 702nd Main Support Battalion machine shop NCOIC, at Camp Kasey. “We can save the Army time and money by making the part (or gadget) ourself, instead of ordering the part from the manufacturer.”

Yet, many military machinist often feel that they are a bit under-utilized. Because of safety restrictions as well as manufacturer copyrights, the military has to keep what appears to be a tight grip on its talented machinists. But in a wartime situation, machinists would likely prove themselves extremely valuable, where immediacy would play a more important role than copyright laws or civilian contracts.

And in real-world training scenarios, the military machine-shop generated metal products prove to be as good as gold.

“People don’t realize the importance of this shop until it’s gone,” said Chief Warrant Officer Richard Krause, officer in charge of 702nd MSB Service and Recovery section.

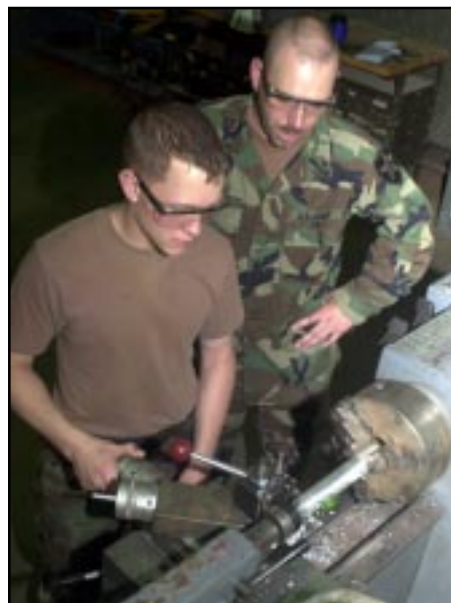
Krause admits, Army maintenance officers in units where there is no S & R shop realize how vital the immediate fulfillment of supply needs are. They learn the hard way, he said. “They miss it, and they are hurting without it.”

Krause believes that his soldiers are a huge asset to the 2nd Infantry Division and USFK.

“You know a box is not a box until someone cuts out six squares and puts them together. Somebody has got to do that. We do that.”

And Krause says that machinists are used to thinking outside of the box.

“In this job you have to think outside of the box. That’s how you survive, but it takes a lot of thought,” said Dieppa.



“It takes a lot of math,” said Marker, but it is not an exact science.

“A lot of times the (OIC) tells us what he needs and we follow through with it,” said Marker. “A lot of times you have to go by the Technical Manual, but many times the individual needs to alter the plan a bit to make things work.”

“Sometimes textbook ways don’t always work, so we have to improvise,” said Pvt. Andrew Tinsley, a machinist with the S and R shop.

“I learn something new everyday. This is such a fascinating field,” said Dieppa. “There are so many possibilities. I love what I do.” When Dieppa first arrived at his shop in Osan, he noticed a Computer Numerical Control Milling Machine that was being a bit underutilized because of its complexities. He dedicated himself to understanding the machine and continues to amaze himself and his chain of command with the machine’s capabilities.

“I never turn a job away,” said Dieppa. He said that he finds that overcoming difficulties is why he keeps doing machine work and stays in the Air Force.

“I like the challenge,” said Pvt. Jermaine Williams, a 702nd MSB welder, of his job. “In fact, I would love to be out in the field right now welding on a tank right now,” he said gesturing to the north of Camp Casey, where the Korean Training Center lies and where 2nd Inf. Div. does most of their field training.

A crack in a tank’s armor presents welders with an interesting challenge. It takes several days to complete a job depending upon how big the crack in the armor is. The welder can only weld a little bit at a time, because he cannot let the metal get too hot. If he allows the metal to do that, the welder will weaken the armor, making it near useless in combat.

“As long as you get the crack back to the way it was before, then it’s all good,” said Williams. “But every job is different.”

“Most of our jobs are undoing someone else’s mistakes,” said Krause of his 702nd S & R shop. The Army machinists spend a lot of time extracting bolts and repairing threads for mechanics who had found themselves in a bit of a quandary.

Mechanics’ work comes to a stand-still when they twist the head off of a bolt and have no way to screw it out again, or if they find threads wore out rendering the part or bolt useless. “We have all kinds of different inserts and tools to fix bolts and threads, said 702nd machinist Andrew Hendrickson, as he fumbled through drawer after drawer looking for the right size tool for the job at hand.

Osan machinist spend the majority of their work inspecting and making bushings and bearings on vital aircraft parts like landing gear. “It’s not the most fun part of the job, but it is what we do,” said Dieppa. And because of the dangers of flight, “It is a big responsibility that we all take very seriously, as we do every aspect of our job.”

A job that does more than just make things happen, one that actually makes things.



Above: Pvt. Jermaine Williams, a 702nd MSB welder, chips away at a job that he had recently fused together. Below: Technical Sgt. Geraldo Dieppa compares the original gadget to the one that he just made using the CNCMM, which displays a 3-D digital read-out of the product.



Doing more before 9 a.m. than most people do all day

by Spc. Jimmy Norris
Area I Public Affairs

Soldiers from B Company, 58th Aviation Regiment, put the old Army cliché, “We do more before 9 a.m. than most people do all day,” to the test Aug. 21 with an emergency deployment readiness exercise.

They began the morning with an alert. Within two hours of the call, all personnel had been accounted for, weapons and equipment had been drawn and the soldiers moved from their Camp Red Cloud headquarters to their Camp Laguardia motor pool.

Jump ahead two hours and all equipment was uploaded, commo checks and pre-combat inspections completed, and the company stood awaiting the order to move out to the airfield at the Republic of Korea Army Post R-217 in Po Chun. They were three hours ahead of schedule.

The order to deploy finally came early in the afternoon. By 2 p.m. the soldiers rolled on to R-217 ready to set up their air traffic control equipment and begin directing traffic. Their ability to react had been tested and proven, but there were more challenges still to come.

“This is a twofold mission,” said 1st Sgt. Jimmy Russell. “First, it’s a training mission. We have to train constantly in Korea because of the high turnover rate. Second, we’re looking at R-217 as a potential IFR (Instrument Flight Rules) recovery airfield.”

Instrument Flight Rules, Russell explained, is a method of air traffic control in which personnel in the control tower guide an aircraft in for a landing. It is commonly employed when severe weather limits pilot visibility. At present, the only IFR recovery airfield on the peninsula is located at Camp Humphreys. Currently, pilots in “Warrior Country” caught in severe weather and are forced to land because of instrument failure, have to change altitude and fly to a southern installation, Russell said.

Other potential sites for

an IFR airfield include R-222, Camp Page and Camp Stanton. R-217 is the favorite according to Sgt. 1st Class Dennis Reamer, platoon Sgt. For B Company’s Terminal Platoon.

“It’s centrally located in Area I and surrounding terrain is the best we’ve found,” he said.

The soldiers involved are excited about the possibility of an IFR airfield in Area I.

“This will be awesome,” said Staff Sgt. Erik Johnson, Terminal Plt., B Co., 58th Av. Reg. “If pilots can’t see where they’re going to land there’s only one airfield for them to go

to and it’s south of Seoul. If we could get an IFR recovery airfield, pilots here could train and fly in any weather.”

While R-217’s viability as an IFR recovery airfield was one of the main reasons for the exercise, the soldiers didn’t forget the value of the training they received.

“The main reason to have an exercise like this is so these soldiers know how to use this equipment to set aircraft down safely,” Russell said referring to the Ground Controlled Approach Radar and the ANTSW7A Air Traffic Control Tower. He said some of the soldiers participating in the exercise had never used the equipment.

“This gives me an opportunity to see different ways of doing a job. I have twelve years of experience in fixed-base facilities, but this is the first time I’ve set up in the field,” said Johnson.

“A lot of people here are straight out of AIT (Advanced Individual Training). This is good for them because it gives them a chance to set up an airfield and control traffic like they would in a war,” said Reamer.

Though some of the soldiers involved saw the exercise as a unique opportunity, others saw it as par for the course.

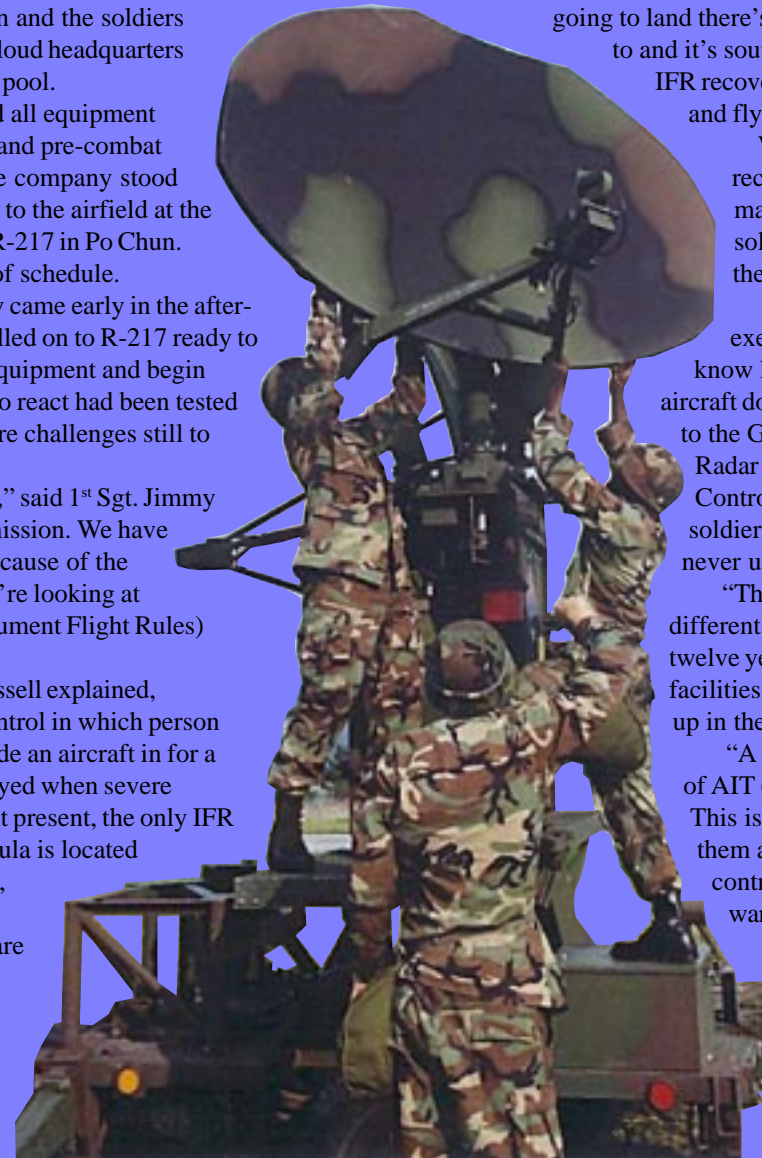
“I’m a soldier,” said Reamer. “Good training is my job.”



Spc. Shala Perry, Terminal Platoon, B Co., 58th Avn. Regt., places UHF and VHF antennas for the Ground Control Approach Radar.



Spc. Derek Barr, B Co., 58th Avn. Regt., demonstrates the use of equipment in the air traffic control tower.



Soldiers from Terminal Platoon, B Co., 58th Aviation Regiment place the dish on the Ground Control Approach Radar.



Staff Sgt. William Butler, Terminal Platoon, B Co., 58th Aviation Regiment, surveys the placement of the Ground Control Approach radar.



Sgt. Eric McKnight, B Co., 58th Avn. Regt. assembles the elevation antenna for the ground control approach radar.

ROK honorguard stays in step

by Pfc. Kim, Nam Kwan
EUSA Public Affairs

A major difference between the U.S. and Republic of Korea militaries is the ROK's mandatory service for males in the ranks of E-5 and below.

Due to this mandatory male service, the total number of ROK female soldiers is few. Compared to U.S. female service members, ROK female soldiers are rare, very rare, but they do exist and fulfill real jobs just like their U.S. counterparts.

From secretary positions to the Honor Guard members, they are spread out throughout the military.

What males can do, they can do, making the Honor Guard one of their available fields.

Colors, drill and ceremony, squared away, and disciplined movements; these are common image of an Honor Guard, and more traditionally associated with males. However, that is not always true, and the ROK Army female Noncommissioned Officer Honor Guard team is

example of that fact.

This Honor Guard team was established in 1989, and is part of the ROK Ministry of National Defense Honor Guard. Their main jobs are performing skills at Honor Guard Ceremonies and providing security at the ROK MND gates.

The team has performed in various arenas, like giving security checks at governmental and MND events, and VIP escort.

However glamorous this may sound, making the Honor Guard is not easy. According to Sgt. 1st Class Song, Eun Ju, Platoon Sergeant of the Honor Guard Platoon, all the members of team are handpicked by team seniors in the female military academy. Once selected they take a test on disciplined movements, status of morale etc...

Upon passing the test, they are made a member of the team. But that is still not the end... it is just the beginning.

"At first, I applied for honor guard because they look sharp, but now I know why they look that way, it is the result of their hard training," said, Staff



Staff. Sgt. Oh, Hyun Ju, and other team members performed their skills in the ceremony.

Sgt. Yeo, Jong Sun, Honor Guard team member.

Upon making the team, a member must take three months of intense training, consisting of Drill and Ceremony, basic disciplined movements, and equipment training. After successfully completing the three-months training, they become a functioning member of team.

"It was not easy, both mentally and physically, performing movements for the public. But after the ceremony, when people gave us a big hand, I was definitely proud of myself," said, Staff Sgt. Oh, Hyun Ju, a brand-new member of the team.

With their stringent dedication to drill and relentless spirit through the difficult times, they experience a comradery that the average soldier may never get to experience. The pride associated with being in the Honor Guard.

Lt. Col. Jung, Kwang Bok, Commander of ROK MND Honor Guard Battalion said, "All of our female Honor guards are doing a great job. It's not a breeze doing a performance ceremony especially in bad weather conditions. You have to perform no matter what. This is the hardest thing to do. But my soldiers never let me down. I appreciate their dedication to their work."



The ROK female NCO Honor Guard team performed ceremonial color skills.

Air Traffic Control on the DMZ

by Capt. John Reynolds
Company B, 58th Aviation

Listen closely as dawn breaks over the heart of Warrior Country (Uijongbu) and you will undoubtedly hear the mighty echo "Team Bravo!" as Company B, 58th Aviation (Air Traffic Services) falls in to start its day with some hard-core PT.

Team Bravo is stationed at several installations throughout Warrior Country. The unit's mission is to provide air traffic services during armistice and war throughout 2nd Infantry Division's area of operations.

In order to accomplish the armistice mission and train for war, Team Bravo is task organized into fixed-base detachments and tactical platoons. The two fixed-base detachments operate the control towers at Camp Stanley's Heliport and Camp Page's Airfield. The tactical platoons are stationed at Camp Red Cloud and train along side 2nd Inf. Div.'s aviation brigade.

The company practices its go-to-war missions of establishing a tactical division airfield, providing air traffic services at pick-up zones, landing zones, and forward arming-refuel points, and providing a flight following/airspace information capability for the Division's aviation assets operating throughout the Division's area of operations. Co. B, 58th Avn. is also responsible for maintaining three remote radio sites located atop mountains within the 2nd Inf. Div. area. The remote sites allow Guardian Control to maintain positive communications with U.S. Army aircraft and provide airspace updates as aviators conduct daily missions in the northern sector of the Republic of Korea and along the DMZ.

During a recent field training exercise, Team Bravo got a chance to practice its wartime mission in a realistic and challenging scenario. From June 25 to July 6 the unit conducted an alert, uploaded its equipment, and deployed to Camp Page and Hill 754. Co. B higher headquarters, the 164th Air Traffic Services Group, controlled the exercise and evaluated the unit's ability to conduct its wartime missions.

A highlight of the exercise involved some air assault training. A scenario during the exercise was a mission to reestablish one of Guardian Control's remote sites, FCC North, which had been notionally destroyed by enemy missile strikes. The Airspace Information Section conducts the tactical mission of providing flight following and airspace information updates through the use of a radio shelter mounted on the back of a five-ton truck.

To accomplish this mission the section deployed with their equipment to the top of a mountain, Hill 754, southeast of Camp Casey. The road leading to the top of Hill 754 could not support getting the section's equipment to the top of the mountain so Team Bravo solicited the help of the Blackcats, Co. A, 52nd Avn.,

A CH-47 from 2nd Bn., 52nd Avn., prepares to slingload an airspace information shelter to Hill 754.

a CH-47 company stationed at Camp Humphreys. The heavy lift helicopter and innovative thinking allowed the Airspace Information Section to accomplish their mission and gain some great experience conducting a slingload operation. With the equipment on the top of the mountain, the section was able set up and get radio coverage for the entire FCC North sector and accomplish the mission of providing flight following and airspace information services for all aircraft operating in the vicinity.

The soldiers operated the airspace information center 24-hours-a-day, for five days and at the same time guarded the assembly area and reacted to notional air, ground and NBC attacks. At the culmination of the exercise, the successful Airspace Information Section seamlessly turned the airspace back over to Guardian Control and redeployed back to Camp Red Cloud, once again with the assistance of the CH-47s.

Another scenario during the exercise was a mission to establish a tactical division airfield for 2nd Inf. Div. The Tower and Ground Control Approach Radar sections conduct the mission of establishing a tactical airfield through the use of a control tower mounted on the back of a 2.5-ton truck and a ground control approach radar system mounted on a 2.5-ton truck and trailer.

The two sections along with the company headquarters ground convoyed to Camp Page and set up the maintenance intensive equipment on the airfield. The tower section quickly assumed control of the airfield and the GCA section installed their radar system and established a precision radar approach to guide aircraft out of the clouds to land safely on the runway.

The tower and GCA sections controlled the airfield and provided radar approach services 24-hours-a-day and, like the airspace information center, guarded the assembly area and reacted to notional air, ground and NBC attacks. The two sections accomplished their mission with exceptional efficiency and the soldiers received some tough, realistic training.

The exercise was a great success and it gave Team Bravo a chance to hone its skills. The realistic and challenging training scenarios forced the leaders to improvise and adapt to accomplish the mission.

The soldiers of Team Bravo are better trained, able to accomplish their complex mission, and ready to fight tonight.



KAFA opens your eyes

by Spc. Keisha Lunsford
EUSA Public Affairs

Upon arrival to Korea service members face a big decision that will affect their entire time here. They can either flee to their barracks only to baracade themselves into the life of a hermit or they can get out and see Korea by opening the adventurous side of themselves.

A great way to break out of this newcomers cocoon is to attend a cultural tour offered by the Korean American Friendship Association.

KAFA sponsors seven tours with the USFK/EUSA Public Affairs Office between June and September to introduce U.S. Forces Korea members to Korean customs and traditions and convey KAFA's appreciation to service members for keeping peace here.

The most recent of these, the Korea House Cultural Orientation Tour, took place on Aug. 16 with 31 soldiers, including myself, from 12 units. According to Catalina de Leon, USFK/EUSA public affairs specialist, most of these tours were usually dedicated to one big command at a time. Tour members represented the U.S. Army Troop Command-Korea, 18th Medical Command, 6th Cavalry Brigade, 175th Finance Command, 501st Military Intelligence Bde., 1st Signal Bde., 8th Military Police Bde., Special U.S. Liaison Advisor-Korea, 8th Personnel Command, Armed Forces Network-Korea, 17th Aviation Bde., and Command Support Coordination Team #3.

Before the tour began, DeLeon explained that this cultural exposure enhances each military member by developing a better understanding and appreciation for Korea.



KATUSA Pfc. Min Byung Wook, USKF/EUSA Community Relations, informs everyone of where their journey will take them at the Kyongbok Palace and the National Folklore Museum.

The six-and-one-half hour tour started with members being met at the Yongsan bus terminal at 3:30 p.m. by Korean Augmentee to the U.S. Army Pfc. Min, Byung Wook of the USFK/EUSA Community Relations Office.

The first stop was at the Kyongbok Palace and the National Folklore Museum. Min said the palace is one of the four major palaces in Korea, and it's the largest palace in Seoul.

The tour was also a great photo opportunity for service members to keep memories of Korea's palaces and historical sites.

The most notable historical aspect of this palace is the 28-letter Korean alphabet Hangeul was proclaimed there in 1446. Hangeul started in 1443 when King Sejong established the Jeongseoncheong (Academy) to work on the creation of the Korean alphabets.

Along the tour, Pvt. 2 William Swanson of 18th MEDCOM, mentioned that he gets Korean cultural exposure by teaching English on the weekends. He said his students take him to different places in Seoul and help him learn more about who they are and their country. "It's (Seoul) a very interesting city," said Swanson. "It sort of reminds me of Los Angeles or New York City." He has been stationed in Korea for three months.

Min also allowed the tour members to venture out on their own which was another interesting part about the tour besides the sites. This allowed members to make the KAFA tour more individual by letting each member focus on their interests, instead of touring as a big group.

The next stop was the Namsan Folk Village and the Korea House for an all-you-can-eat buffet dinner of Korean specialties.

At the village, members roamed the different scenic paths alone or with new acquaintances. One of the paths leads to a circular time capsule that will be opened in 400 years. On top of the capsule, marks many signatures and dates from many past Korean and foreign government officials who've visited there.

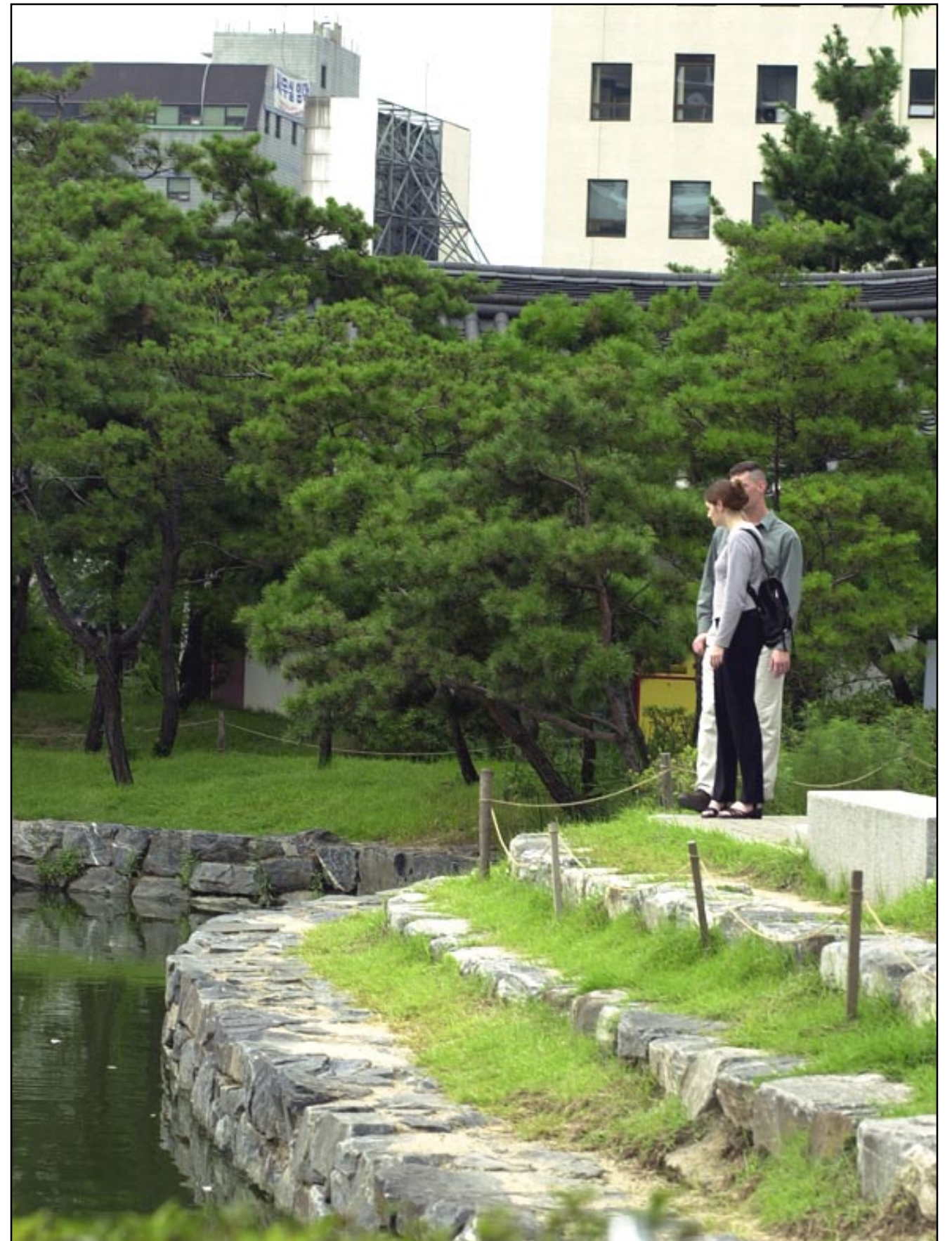
Just outside the passage to the time capsule, Pfc. William Moore of the 6th Cav. Bde., reflected on the importance of this KAFA tour in his life.

"I'm finally getting the real experience of Korea," he said, while reflecting about when his father was here as a Marine during the Korean War.

"To me, it gives me a chance to somewhat experience history—as to where the Koreans were and how they've come up in society," he said.

The last stop was a traditional Korean music and dance performance at the Chong Dong Theatre.

The performers gave everyone a site to remember through traditional dances, such as



Two tour members take in the beauty of the Namsan Folk Village pond with downtown Seoul just behind it.

the popular and colorful Fan Dance and the Three Drum Dance along with Korean sounds from the Sanjo Ensemble of the Namdo Province, farmer’s music and the Salpuri (Soul Appeasement) in which a dancer tries to expel evil spirits.

As a finale, they performed the Pangut, which is known as a farmer’s dance using an hourglass drum with loud beats. Each drummer took turns showing off their talents and intriguing the audience by whirling a long rope, attached to their hat, as they danced.

“It’s very outstanding,” commented Sgt. Joe Reyes of 175th FINCOM, about the performers. “I think they put on a good show.”



After the performance was over, everyone was sleepy and ready to retire home. The tour helped open up more eyes about being stationed in the Land of the Morning Calm.

“You can grow up a whole lot in Korea because the things that you can and can not do...are all of the things that you took for granted in the U.S., and Korea opens your eyes,” said Moore.

KAFA also sponsors other morale enhancing projects such as the Home Visitation program, which allows USFK members to spend the evening with a Korean family.

One of the tour members, Chief Warrant Officer Honesto Padlan of 18th MEDCOM, said, “It’s an eye opener.” He still keeps in contact with the family he met 11 years ago on his first tour to Korea. This is his second tour to Korea and his KAFA tour was much different because of how Korea has changed since last here. Padlan encouraged everyone to come out on the KAFA tours.

If you are interested in a cultural tour of Seoul, the United Services Organization offers various tours on the weekends. The fee is usually very inexpensive. Even though most places accept American money, it is always best to bring Korean money when sightseeing on the economy.

For more information, call USO’s Camp Kim office at 724-3301.



Left: Pfc. William Moore, reads a signature of one of the many noblemen, who've visited the Time Capsule near the Namsan Folk Village. Above: Pfc. Stacie Hambrick peeks into one of the rooms inside the Kyongbok Palace. Right: Spc. Phillip Lambert flips his coin into an old well at the Namsan Folk Village, after making a wish.



Lions and tigers and bears...oh my



Polar bears try and avoid the hot days in Seoul by relaxing and swimming near and in the cool pond of their pen.

Park hours:

9 a.m. to 6 p.m. (Oct.-March)

9 a.m. to 7 p.m. (April-Sept.)

Admission:

Adult 1,500 won

Child 1,200 won

Dolphin shows:

11:30 a.m., 1:30 p.m., 3 p.m.

(Sunday's and Holidays

fourth show 4:30 p.m.)

Telephone: (02) 500-7114

By Spc. Tommy Graham

EUSA Public Affairs

If there was a Korean version of Busch Gardens — Seoul Grand Park would be it.

They don't have the monorail heading through the middle of the animal domain, but they do have the sky ride, which can give tourists a bird's eye view of the zoo's estimated 3,000 animals.

Park visitors also have the option of walking the trails to see the lions, tigers and polar bears up close.

"Our park is mostly visited by families," said Ryu Hae Kyung, Seoul Grand Park public relations. "(It's) an ideal place for kids, family members and couples to relax and enjoy the beauty of nature."

For the children, the park affords them a chance to get a "hands on" experience with some of the less carnivorous animals at the zoo. They also can learn about feeding elephants, hippopotami and rhinos or meet exotic bugs in the insect classroom.

"Our dolphin show is very popular among young kids," said Ryu.

Guest can see the dolphin show three times daily.

The dolphin shows may be popular, but the park's "star attraction" is Vera, a white tiger born Feb. 2, 1999. Vera is a very rare tiger. According to the park, only one white tiger can be found in every 100,000 normal tigers.

In addition to being the nation's largest zoo, the park also has a botanical garden consisting of more than 169,000 plants including tropical plants, subtropical plants, cactus, fleshy plants, oriental orchids and ferns.

Also just a stone throw away from the zoo is Seoul Land, which is an amusement park that offers more than 40 rides.

Seoul Grand Park is located just south of Seoul city limits, but can be reached using the Seoul subway on line number four and getting off at Seoul Grand Park Station.

From there it's just a short walk to the park.



Above: Masai Giraffes get the best view of Seoul Land Park since their height can reach 5.2 meters, making them the world's tallest animal. **Right:** The White Rhinoceros, which weight between 2,300-3,600 as an adult, seemed to be a favorite among children.

